

permits issued in many of the counties bordering one of the sounds or the Atlantic Ocean continued to increase (Armington 1989).

Licenses to use or extract public resources from coastal waters have dramatically increased. Commercial fishing vessel licenses issued by the Division of Marine Fisheries increased from 2,600 in 1954 to almost 21,000 in 1988 (DMF Reports 1988).

### **Conflicts Between Users**

The increase in population and the greater demand on aquatic public trust resources have brought conflict. There has been conflict between fishermen and developers over the building of marinas adjacent to shellfishing waters.

Conflict has arisen between various recreational users of the state's coastal public trust waters. For example, at the urging of swimmers, boaters and shoreline residents, some local governments are searching for ways to control the use of jet skis.

And there has been conflict between those who desire to appropriate public trust land and water for private use (for marinas and aquaculture facilities etc.) and those who want these areas to remain open for public use.

Just as the demise of shellfishing in the late 1800s generated "efforts to define rights", the many conflicts of today have left law and policy-makers searching for equitable solutions. The result has been a plethora of laws and regulations. Perhaps the most notable is the state's Coastal Area Management Act.

CAMA, which became law in 1974, recognized that the state's coastal area was being subjected to pressures "which are the result of the often conflicting need of a society expanding in industrial development, in population and in the recreational aspirations of its citizens." GS [General Statutes of N.C.]113A-102. The Act established a strategy for state and local cooperation to manage environmentally sensitive and important resources. Public trust waters are one of the areas singled out by the Act as environmentally important and in need of management attention.

Even with CAMA's management directives, conflicts in the state's public trust waters have continued to increase. Consequently, policy-makers are still searching for innovative management schemes.

### **The Albemarle-Pamlico Study**

In 1986, the Environmental Protection Agency funded the Albemarle-Pamlico Estuarine Study. The study is designed to combine scientific research and evaluation of potential management alternatives to ensure the long range productivity of our estuarine waters. The study's basic purpose was succinctly described in 1987 by Congressman Walter Jones, chairman of the U.S. Congressional Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries. In an address at a public participation workshop in Washington, N.C. Jones stated that "the study is a means for federal, state and local governments to join forces in a common effort to explore and understand the estuary."

It was from the Albemarle-Pamlico Estuarine Study that this project and report were born. The report contains a management option for the public trust waters of the state's estuaries. The option presented is a model water use plan for the public trust waters of Carteret County, North